

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Status of Claims:

No claims are currently being cancelled.

Claims 1, 2, 6-13, 18 and 19 are currently being amended.

No claims are currently being added.

This amendment and reply amends claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claims remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1-19 are pending in this application.

Claim Objections:

In the Office Action, claims 1, 2, 6-11 and 18 were objected to, for the reasons set forth on pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action. By way of this amendment and reply, all of these objections (except for the one concerning the word "therewith" in claim 2, whereby that word has been deleted since it was superfluous in any event) have been overcome by accepting the Examiner's helpful suggestions provided on pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action.

Claim Rejections – Prior Art:

In the Office Action, claims 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,850,716 to Kurihara; claims 4 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kurihara in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,606,613; claims 6-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kurihara in view of Lee and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,903,647 to Ronning; claims 12 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,058,476 to Matsuzaki et al. in view of Ronning; claims 13-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matsuzaki et al. in view of Ronning and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,023,506 to Ote et al.; claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matsuzaki et al., Ronning and Ote et al. and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,124,094 to Kobayashi et al.; claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being

unpatentable over Matsuzaki et al. and Ronning and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,024,500 to Ashizaki et al.; claim 16 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matsuzaki et al., Ronning and Ote et al. and further in view of Ashizaki et al.; and claim 17 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matsuzaki et al., Ronning, Ote et al. and Kobayashi, and further in view of Ashizaki et al. These rejections are traversed with respect to the presently pending claims under rejection, for at least the reasons given below.

The present invention is directed to preventing internal information of a Hard Disk Drive (HDD) of a copying apparatus from being decoded after the HDD is removed from the copying apparatus. As such, the present invention has a feature of including an encryption key memory for storing an encryption key used for encryption and decryption.

The encryption key memory (see memory 820 in Figure 1 of the drawings, for example) is a volatile memory, and corresponds to the volatile storage means recited in claim 1. The encryption key is set when power is switched on and the encryption key is erased when power is switched off. Accordingly, the present invention can prevent the internal information stored in an HDD from being decoded even when the HDD is stolen at the time of power off, since the encryption key has been erased.

By contrast, Kurihara describes a non-volatile environment configuring memory 11. However, the environment configuring memory 11 is not used for storing an encryption key. That is, Kurihara fails to disclose or suggest an encryption key that is stored in a non-volatile memory.

Accordingly, presently pending independent claim 1 is not anticipated by Kurihara.

With respect to presently pending independent claims 12 and 18, those claims now recite a display means for prompting a user to input a key a plurality of times.

Neither Matsuzaki et al. nor Ronning teaches or suggests such a display means as recited in claims 12 and 18. In particular, while Figure 9 of Matsuzaki shows an encryption apparatus that has a monitor, there is no teaching or suggestion that this monitor prompts a user to input a key a plurality of times. Ronning is used in the Office Action to show a non-volatile memory, and fails to rectify the above-mentioned deficiencies of Matsuzaki.

Thus, presently pending independent claims 12 and 18 are patentable over the cited art of record.

Conclusion:

Since all of the issues raised in the Office Action have been addressed in this Amendment and Reply, Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check or credit card payment form being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicants hereby petition for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorize payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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